to eyther of theſe: God defend me from theſe two.

Ner. How ſay you by the French Lord, *Mounſier le Boune?*

Por. God made him, and therefore let him paſſe for a man, in truth I know it is a ſinne to be a mocker, but he, why he hath a horſe better then the Neapolitans, a better bad habite of frowning then the Count Palatine, hee is euery man in no man, if a Traſſell ſing, hee fals ſtraight a capring, hee will fence with his owne ſhadow. If I ſhould marry him, I ſhould marry twenty husbands: if he would deſpiſe me, I would forgiue him, for if he loue me to madneſſe, I ſhall neuer requite him.

Ner. What ſay you then to *Fauconbridge*, the young Baron of England?

Por. You know I ſay nothing to him, for he vnderſtands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latine, French, nor Italian, & you will come into the Court and ſweare that I haue a poore penniworth in the Engliſh: he is a proper mans picture, but alas who can conuerſe with a dumbe ſhow? how odly he is ſuted, I think he bought his doublet in *Italy*, his round hoſe in *France*, his bonnet in *Germany*, and his behauiour euery where.

Neriſſa. What thinke you of the Scottiſh Lord his Neighbour?

Por. That he hath a neighbourly charity in him, for he borrowed a boxe of the eare of the Engliſhman, and ſwore he wold pay him againe when he was able: I thinke the Frenchman became his ſurety, and ſeald vnder for another.

Ner. How like you the young *Germaine*, the Duke of *Saxonies* nephew?

Por. Very vildely in the morning when he is ſober, and moſt vilely in the afternoone when he is drunke: when he is beſt, hee is a little worſe then a man, and when he is worſt he is little better then a beaſt; and the worſt fall that euer fell, I hope I ſhall make ſhift to go without him.

Ner. If he ſhould offer to chooſe, and chooſe the right Caſket, you ſhould refuſe to performe your fathers wil, if you ſhold refuſe to accept him.

Por. Therfore for feare of the worſt, I prethee ſet a deep glaſſe

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *Merchant of Venice* (STC 22297) LONDON, 1600 [1619] THE BODLEIA